

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

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P R O C E E D I N G S

BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, April 30, 1974

10:00 o'clock a.m.

H.-C. LUTTRELL, Chairman

Wild Life and Fisheries
Building
400 Royal Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter



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P R O C E E D I N G S

. . . The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission was held on Tuesday, April 30, 1974, at 10:00 o'clock a.m., at the Wild Life and Fisheries Building, 400 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, H. C. Luttrell, Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT WERE:

H. C. LUTTRELL, Chairman
M. DUPUY, JR., Vice Chairman
J. B. ANGELLE, Director
D. G. BERRY, Member
J. G. JONES, Member
J. H. LAPEYRE, Member
J. THOMPSON, Member
D. F. WILLE, Member

A G E N D A

1. Approval of minutes of January 29, 1974 and February 19, 1974. (5)

DR. LYLE ST. AMANT

2. Setting of the spring shrimp season. (6)

MR. TED O'NEIL



3. Recommendation to Board relative to properties (32)
in Vermilion Parish.

MR. RICHARD YANCEY

4. Advance payment to Ducks, Unlimited, \$50,000. (37)
5. Ratify amended budget dealing with land (49)
acquisition.

MR. ALLAN ENSMINGER

6. Approval of Mineral Board to receive bids on (51)
2,220 acres of land on Rockefeller
Refuge for mineral lease.
7. Request from Pennzoil Producing Company for (53)
permission to construct drilling slip
on State Lease 2340, Well #15, Rocke-
feller Refuge.

OTHER BUSINESS

8. Mr. Barry Kohl, Orleans Audubon Society. (81)
Lafitte-LaRose Highway; its impact on
sport and commercial fishing industry.
9. Authorize Board Member to represent Commission (55)
at Outdoor Writers Association in Quebec,
Canada.
10. Special meeting May 16 and 17 at Spring Bayou (57)
GMA to inspect facilities at Saline GMA



- for acceptance or rejection of repairs.
- Discussion of proposed study of changes in
coon hunting season. (58)
- Discussion of proposed changes in bullfrog
season. (70)
- Discussion of shrimping industry, seasons. (71)
- Prohibition of taking of female blue crabs. (72)
- Discussion of oyster seed grounds and
leases. (100)

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CHAIRMAN H. C. LUTTRELL: Ladies and gentlemen, if you will come to order, we will open the meeting this morning.

We have in the audience a distinguished visitor, former member of the Board, Mr. Walker. Stand up, please, and take a bow. (Applause) My neighbor and friend.

We have a fairly long agenda today and I would like to ask that those people who wish to speak would say whatever you need to say but if there is a group of you speaking on the same subject



and it would be all right, I would like to have just one speak on it, so that we can move along as quickly as possible.

Now if we all have seats and I can be heard, I want to make a few remarks before opening. You who are here and who wish to speak on anything that might be coming up today, I would like if you would hold up your hand and be recognized. I cannot call you by your name because I do not know you, but I will ask that you come to the microphone and tell us who you are, what you represent, and then speak, but please let's don't speak out of turn or until you are recognized by the Chair.

The first order of business, all the members received a copy of the minutes of January 29 and February 19.

MR. JAMES THOMPSON: I move they be approved as read.

MR. JONES: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the motion that the minutes be approved as read, or as written. All in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.



THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

THE CHAIRMAN: So ordered. Now we will get into the first order of business, unless there is some other business by the members. O.K., I will call on Dr. Lyle St. Amant.

DR. LYLE ST. AMANT: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, we had a meeting last Friday at the Hilton Hotel and we had a large crowd, perhaps 300 people. We gave a detailed presentation of the data that we collected this year on the shrimp situation and we pointed out the pros and cons, the good and bad points, of what the data looked like.

Today I hope to run over them very briefly. I have got only the key slides that I think we need to look at. I will give you this information to refresh your memory and anybody else that saw this and then I will tell you what I think about what the data indicate.

Now each year when we get to looking at this shrimp situation, we try to determine two things, whether we have any shrimp; if we do have



any shrimp, how fast they are growing and when they will be ready to harvest; and the third thing, of course, is how many shrimp are on hand, so we can determine that so we will know whether we will have a big crop or an average crop or a small crop.

Now one of the things that our people have determined over a number of years and by looking at a great many statistics and data that we have gathered here is that the temperature has some effect, or a considerable effect, on the growth rate and production of shrimp. The main thing we have found is that low temperatures during the month of April are the most critical, and the more hours that you have with temperatures less than 20 degrees or 68 degrees Fahrenheit, the less shrimp you have and the less days or hours you have with temperatures below that figure, the better production you have.

The tall bars on here indicate high production years, 1963, '67, '69. We had a warm April. The waters were quite warm. The years we had low production, '61, '64 and again in '73, we had cold water temperatures during the month of April for



50 hours or so, and then last year we had over 100 hours.

This year, 1974, you will note that our temperatures have been somewhat better. We have only had about, it looks like about 35 hours when it has been too cold. However, we have had some rainfall that seems to have complicated it, which will show up in a minute.

Last year, if you will recall, we had a very great deal of fresh water, because of the high river and heavy rainfall, and we lost about half of our acreage. The broken line between there and the coast is what we had last year. The dotted line is where we normally expect to have shrimp, all the way up, so we had about 50 percent loss in this acreage last year. Now the peculiar thing is, even though we didn't have the extreme floods in the Mississippi River this year, we seem to have a great deal of fresh water, both from early river rises and from local rainfall.

Here is another thing that should be obvious and, of course, interesting. The pounds of shrimp that are caught, which is closely associated



with the number of acres available for the shrimp to grow in and where the water is salty. Of course, we calculate this acreage based on how much salt is in the area. If it has more than ten parts per thousand and down to five parts per thousand, we consider it usable by shrimp. When we get these heavy rains and high rivers, the acreage drops.

Last year it was quite obvious that the acreage was down below one million, around one million. In normal years we have about two million acres of land where the shrimp are able to grow when they come in.

The unfortunate thing is, in 1974, which is in the bottom graph, the acreage is even less than 1973. Now we think that this might not have quite as much effect as it looks like it will, because this low acreage occurred early in the season, and we feel that perhaps if we can get some dry weather in April and in May that this will increase, and it should bump the production up some, but I think this very fact will keep down any possibility of an exceptional year of production.

There is not much question there are



plenty of shrimp who moved in or attempted to move in and survive in the marshes this year. All of the areas, particularly 3, 6 and 4, had high or good post-larval movements. Area 4, which is the central part of the state, lower Terrebonne from Bayou Lafourche westward, had an exceptional movement of shrimp into that area.

The average salinity in 1974 across the state seems to be a little bit higher, at least in the areas where it did occur. The acreage does seem to be less, but we believe that this salinity is going to increase. However, even if it does increase, it is still going to fall somewhere below what we might consider normal, years like '72 and '71.

The salinity in Barataria Bay, if you will note, for a while was lower in 1974, right there, than it was in '73. Then it began to climb and we had some heavy rains about two or three weeks ago and it dropped again. We believe that this should rise. However, the whole system for '74 is still less in Barataria Bay than in normal years, you might say.



This shows the number of shrimp available. It is based on the average catch that we make in these trawl samples, these small trawls, and it is running perhaps at this time around 50 to 60, maybe 70 shrimp per catch. Considered on a statewide basis, this is below average. The two areas, 5 and 4, probably are approaching average or better than average, but this is averaged out, and we feel that the total amount of shrimp in the state is probably a little bit below average, but not much. Even in the better years, it rarely reaches 100 on a statewide basis, somewhere in there, so we have got a good many shrimp in the state if we can hang on to them.

One thing that disturbs us is this Barataria Bay picture. 1974 is well down. It started fairly high but at this point in time it is below what it was in 1964, and if anybody remembers '64, that's the year that I stuck my neck out and got it chopped off. We made a prediction in '64 based on the post-larvae, and when we had bad weather later on we lost most of these shrimp, so we are being a little bit careful here. The situation in



Barataria Bay, at least in the 17th week, which is toward the end of April, mid-April, is not too good. However, there is still recruitment. There is still a lot of post-larvae moving in and we feel if we can get some warm weather and salty conditions, this should climb and we ought to be in fair condition.

How here is the good part. Just across Bayou Lafourche in the Terrebonne area and over as far as Lake Pelto, Pelican Lake, around in that general area, the Cocodrie area, we have an exceptional catch of shrimp. They are running up to 400 to a sample, which is quite unusual.

We did have a drop associated with these high winds and also the high tides. We think the shrimp are scattered. We don't believe we have lost them, but even if we have lost them, we are still running way above the 200 level which you would normally expect.

The average size of the shrimp started out quite high but, as you will notice, it didn't grow too fast.

Now this is a critical chart. You need



to take a close look at it because it may have some effect on the decision of the Commission and on what the industry wants.

You will notice the size of the shrimp in 1974 start off nearly twice as large as they were in normal years. This apparently was because of a mild winter and an early warm spell and the shrimp came in and grew, and then instead of growing at a rate that we would expect, we began to get some rain and cold weather and the line tended to level off. By the 17th week the size in 1974 is about what it was in 1971, which was a rapidly growing year and one in which the shrimp were ready at a relatively early date.

As compared to 1973 and even '72, 1974 even at the 17th week is about, oh, twice as large, so they are several weeks ahead. This indicates to us that if growth starts like it should pick up as soon as the temperature picks up, we should have some rather large shrimp, at least by mid-May.

Here shows what happened. The temperature dropped and when that temperature dropped, the growth rate tended to level off. The overall growth



rates across the whole state have shown this, except Area 2, where we do have some rapid growth taking place. We can expect an upward trend in all these areas if weather conditions return to normal.

Now this is the final slide and shows what you might expect in the month of May, predicated on a normal growth rate, and it is also, you should keep in mind, based on the average of the whole state. This indicates that by May 13 we would have about 35.5 percent of the shrimp that were marketable, large enough to shrimp and use, and by May 20 about 55.5 percent.

If you were to break this down by area, you would find that the area probably in Barataria Bay and in Terrebonne Bay would be ahead of this. This is the area where at the present time we have the major shrimp concentration, and if growth continues in here this probably would drop back at least one notch, to where you might expect something on the order of 55 percent by the 13th or certainly by the 15th and 35 percent by the 6th.

Based on these data, I would suggest to the Commission that either May 13 or May 20 would



be satisfactory opening dates. Thank you.

MR. JERRY JONES: I have a question of Dr. St. Amant.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. St. Amant.

MR. JONES: In your sampling, what did you find as to the white shrimp that were in these areas, the size, on your latest samples?

DR. ST. AMANT: The number of white shrimp is below what you would expect in maximum years. However, there is a fair concentration of white shrimp in the western part of Terrebonne Bay. They are quite large. Excuse me. Terrebonne Parish. There are also some white shrimp along the coast in the western part of the state and a good many of them in the Calcasieu Lake area. These shrimp are running on the order of about 30 count, 30-36 count in some areas, and certainly will be available to the industry when the season is opened.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

Before we ask for anyone from the floor who cares to speak, I want to recognize a very



distinguished man that is in the audience with us and a good friend of mine, I hope. Mr. A. J. Buquet, former member of the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission. Stand up, Mr. Buquet, and take a bow. (Applause)

Now do we have anyone in the audience who cares to comment or to speak on this matter? Yes, sir. Come to the mike, please, and state your name and whom you represent.

MR. WALTER SCOTT MOLERO: Mr. Chairman, Members of the Board of Commissioners, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Walter Scott Molero. I am a police juror from St. Bernard Parish, representing the coastal area of that Parish.

Gentlemen, every year about the end of April we gather here on Royal Street to discuss the opening and the closing of our brownie season. As in the past, I have seen some pretty good battles but I don't think we will will see one today. I represent the people on the East Bank, and for some reason or other, the East Bank and the West Bank have a hard time getting together on the opening date.



We on the East Bank, I would say if we open the season May 6 or May 13, the fishermen on the East Bank, all they are going to do is strain water. You take Friday past Dr. St. Amant and his staff gave us a very good talk on about what we expect to have this coming May.

I would like to see the Commission make the season, if at all possible, a flexible season whereby the fishermen in the state of Louisiana could harvest the best possible crop of our shrimp production. We are zoned as Areas 1, 2, 3 and 4. I would like to recommend that the Commission make it a flexible season, say opening two weeks prior to the opening of the East Bank. Keep it a 60-day season and let us extend our season two weeks beyond. That would give all the fishermen in the state of Louisiana the benefit by the production of our shrimp.

Gentlemen, there is no reason why the people from the East Bank and the West Bank can't get together and work this situation out. You take, if we on the East Bank had a majority of shrimp, as they have on the West Bank, we would



want to catch them, so I don't blame these people. I am for them 100 percent. But I can't see our fishermen on the East Bank going out there for two weeks, straining water, going into debt, whereby it will be very expensive to them, and when they do catch a few shrimp, it is going to go into paying off the debt two weeks prior to that.

I would say, gentlemen, that we have a staff in the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission that should be highly recommended for their work and efforts, and I don't see why you gentlemen on the Board of Commissioners can't come up with a solution whereby we could reap the harvest of all the shrimp in the state of Louisiana.

So I am going to put the East Bank at your mercy and see if we can come up with some solution. Thank you very much, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Molero. I will ask Mr. Angelle to respond.

DIRECTOR J. B. ANGELLE: Mr. Chairman, Member of the Commission, and Mr. Molero, this type of management program is now under consideration of the staff of the Commission. We don't feel that



we have enough time at this time to initiate this type of management program this year. However, it is being given consideration and I think, come around next shrimp season, that this could be or will be a management program offered to the shrimp-ing industry next shrimping season.

MR. MOLERO: Thank you very much, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now do we have someone else in the audience who wants to speak on this shrimp season this year? Yes, sir.

MR. GEORGE SNOW: Mr. Chairman, Members of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen, I am George Snow, Executive Director, Louisiana Shrimp Association. Our members reviewed the findings of Dr. St. Amant after the presentation last Friday. Now the most important thing to us is that the conservation or management of this shrimp resource of ours should produce the maximum number of pounds or dollars, and in this respect the most critical information, we feel, that Dr. St. Amant has presented is that with relation to the percentage of marketable shrimp at the various opening dates.

Now obviously, the latest opening date



is going to give you the greatest yield, and in this connection we are therefore recommending the 25th as the opening date or, failing that, the 20th or any date in between.

Now this is going to be a very critical year for all shrimp fishermen. All have faced tremendous operational increases. Now the primary cost element, of course, is fuel, but we also have the costs of netting, doors, paint, any accessories for the boat have nearly doubled. Now in this event, if your catch rates are such that you are going to have much greater than last year, you can perhaps afford some reduction in your prices. If they are at the same rate as last year, at relatively low prices for your operational costs, you are going to have to get more money for the shrimp than you got last year.

Now on the basis of the present market, we cannot see where this is going to happen, because we had the highest price in the history of the shrimp industry last year, and as of the past couple of months prices, particularly on the smaller sizes, have been tumbling very rapidly.



So, it would seem, if you go to the opening date between the 20th and 25th, you would hopefully come up with larger shrimp which would command a little better price. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Snow. Yes, sir. Come to the mike, please.

MR. LEO KERNER: Gentlemen of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Leo Kerner. I am the Justice of the Peace and Mayor of Lafitte, Barataria, Crown Point. This is my 17th year that I have come up here. Even before they had the Commission, we argued about the shrimp.

You know, we hear that last year was a bad year, but I just want you to check the records, and I believe this is what we have to live by; in June of 1970, '71, '72 and '73, the month of June produced about the same amount of Brazilian shrimp, brownies. The reason why we had a bad year last year is because we opened the season too late. The shrimps had already started to move out to the Gulf of Mexico, and if you don't believe what I am telling you, you call Quivas (phonetic) down on the bayou and everybody that sells salt, and the big



boats last year was begging to have salt sent out to them because they couldn't handle Brazilian shrimp as they were moving out.

Those shrimps come in from the Gulf of Mexico and they go back to the Gulf of Mexico from where they come from. Never have any shrimp ever come from inland waters. You talk about having sanctuaries in inland waters. There is no such a thing as that because the shrimps don't stay there long enough and nobody can tell you how long they will be there because they move with the current. Those shrimp come in here and if you get a little north wind, they go back out. The only time you catch shrimp inside for a long time is when you get a lot of south wind and get them trapped in the lake, and if they stay in the lake too long, they die.

We remember this in 1957 and '58 when the shrimp stayed in Lake Salvador and we were catching Brazilian there in the latter part of July. We would catch 100 pounds and have of them were chocolate, they were dead. We had to cull them out. The fact is it was taking them too much time to



cull them and we had to cull them out.

This year, gentlemen, we are asking for the 13th. Now we had a meeting in Lafitte. I am not up here representing little boats. I am up here representing what I think is best and what the fishermen told me they think is best. I have a petition here that we had a meeting in Lafitte on April 19. This is little and large boats. The two recommendations they made was May 6 and May 13. Now all these signatures here are valid. Every one of them was signed by the fishermen here, every one of them.

The meeting was called for three things, to support the Constitution, the new one; to continue the road from Lafitte to LaRose; and the opening dates of the season. These are the people that signed for all three of them and we had it published in the paper that these are the things we wanted.

Now I know that the people who are recommending a later season are the people that sit behind the desks and they are representing one segment of the shrimping industry. I am talking



about the man who spoke before me. Now we have nothing against him and I don't blame him, because we know he would like to have a larger shrimp, but that is not the way it is for the little boats, gentlemen. Never in the history of the state of Louisiana has the little boats made money with large shrimps. Never have they caught large shrimp in quantities in any length of time in inland waters.

You take from the time the shrimp start moving in in the months of April and May, they are small. As they grow, they keep moving further and further out. Then we come to the white shrimp that start moving in here the latter part of July, sometimes the latter part of June. They stay here until about September, and then we get another crop moving in and if we get a little storm or a hurricane, they start moving out.

When you get around October -- and I have heard plenty of people say they want to keep the 68-count on shrimp - never, never did the shrimps ever make the size from October to January. Never. They never did and they never will, because Louisiana



produces small shrimp and there ain't no law or nobody else is going to stop that. We have to catch them when they come in, if you want to catch any shrimp in inland waters.

You can take right now and close the season right now in inland waters. Don't put a trawl nowheres in inland waters and open it on January 1st and you don't have any shrimp inside. So it just goes to show you that they move in and out.

This year we have had a hot winter. I have come before this Commission and asked for a later date when we have had a cold winter, when we have had real cold weather and you have ice around Christmas and you have to wear a heavy coat to go to church. We have been up here asking for late dates, but we have had a hot winter. The Brazilian shrimps are moving in, and we need to catch them. If we don't, they will leave us. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Kerner. Did you want to leave that petition with us for our consideration or not?

MR. KERNER: Yes. Most of it is about



the Lafitte-LaRose Road, on the top of it, but all these people here recommended the 6th but there were more people there, a lot more fishermen, for the 13th than there were for the 6th. But there was no later date that was asked for.

THE CHAIRMAN: I wasn't suggesting that you do. I was just offering, if you cared to.

Now, do we have someone else who wants to be heard? All right, sir.

MR. DANIEL ARCENEUX: Dan Arceneaux. I don't represent any particular group but I would like to speak on behalf of a situation that has been taking place in the past and I would like to continue in that line.

I fish in the north section of the east side of the river, which is Lake Pontchartrain, the Rigolets and the Shelf. I would like the Commission to keep in mind that the shrimp that come into Lake Pontchartrain and spawn, or not spawn but grow, and then leave, after leaving Lake Pontchartrain, two to three miles to five miles past the Rigolets outlet, they are in Mississippi waters. If we are not given the chance, the Louisiana



shrimpers, to catch these shrimp, I don't see why we have such a great lake to grow such great shrimp and I would like the Commission to consider the opportunity to continue opening the Rigolets and the Shelf. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Doctor, would you respond on that, please?

DR. ST. AMANT: During the last several years we have opened several areas east of the river during the latter part of the season and even extending it. This has been made possible by action of the legislature through joint resolutions which direct the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to make studies in the area and, if the shrimp were there, if they were marketable shrimp and there was no significant amount of white shrimp, then we had the right to open these areas.

If the legislature so directs us to do that again this year, we would certainly do it. We have no objection to it and it has worked out very nicely, both in the Breton Sound area and in the Rigolets area.

I suggest that if you have an interest



in this, you see that something is done about it in this coming legislature. We are willing to act but we cannot act beyond the existing law without some direction.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Doctor. I would like to make this statement, and I hope that no one will take offense. Mr. Arceneaux, I would like the discussion now to stay with the question at hand, the opening of the shrimp season, and if there is anybody here who has a question that they want to address to the Board concerning anything else other than the opening of the shrimp season, hold it to last, please. We do want you to be heard and please hold up your hand, but let's stay with the consideration of the opening of the shrimp season for the time being.

Do we have someone else who wants to be heard?

MR. NORBERT COLLINS: I am "Nervy" Collins. I represent Quality Seafoods. All I am here for is to ask you all to open for the 6th, no later than the 13th, because the shrimp is there. They are big enough to catch and I don't see no reason why



we can't catch them. I am not against nobody on both sides. All I am asking for is the 6th or the 13th. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Collins.

Do we have someone else who cares to be heard on the opening of the shrimp season?

MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, if these is no one else to be heard, I move we set the season effective May 13.

MR. WILLE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, it has been moved and seconded that the season be opened as of the 13th. Those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

The motion is carried.

(Full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, in accordance with the law established in the Revised Statutes, Title 56, Section 497, the



Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission is authorized to open and close annually the brown shrimp season, and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has reviewed the requests of the fishermen, industry and sportsmen, as well as the biological predictions and recommendations of the biologists of the Oysters, Water Bottoms and Seafoods Division,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby declare the spring brown shrimp season to open at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, May 13, 1974 and continue until midnight on Friday, July 12, 1974.

THE CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Buquet.

MR. A. J. BUQUET: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen, my name is A. J. Buquet and I appear here before you as A. J. Buquet and the President of American Shrimp Cannery Association, and wish to tell you



that we are going to abide by your judgment. We thank you. We may not necessarily have asked for that or recommended it, but we are satisfied and will abide by it.

But primarily I am here to commend Dr. St. Amant, you gentlemen, and his personnel, for having done an outstanding job year after year for a number of years in the preparation of this data. I think it is excellent, well prepared and the great majority of the people in the shrimping industry will be for and will be satisfied with your decision.

But along with that I would like to bring to you attention the fact that there are some people in this audience who are in disagreement with you and they are entitled to be in disagreement with Dr. St. Amant and his department because we are all entitled to our own opinions. But the point I am driving at is that you have done a phenomenal job. The department has done that and the proof is there and we in the industry are satisfied that they have. We are asking you to continue and to expand the job that you have been doing.



We feel that definitely the effort could be put out and definitely that the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries could bring to the industry information concerning the white shrimp. There is a perpetual argument that the latter season is damaging to the incoming crop of white shrimp, which can be argued. So, we ask you, please continue this program and expand this program because you definitely have done a good job.

Thank you for hearing me. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Buquet, for these words of wisdom, and let me assure you that you are welcome at any meeting. We hope that you come back to all of them. We always would like to have your opinion.

MR. BUQUET: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Nothing else on the shrimp, gentlemen? We will continue with the next item on the agenda. Are there any other questions? Mr. O'Neil.

MR. TED O'NEIL: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Commission, back in the early 50's the Commission had purchased a plot of land in Abbeville



for fur sales, fur sales from the various refuges. At that time Abbeville was more or less the center of the three refuges, but since then transportation and roads and highways have made it unnecessary to have a central headquarters that far away from the refuges. On this piece of property that we purchased in the early 50's, there is an old brick building that is about to fall down and it is dangerous, and there is a tower that is dangerous to airplanes. Most of us who fly around there know where the tower is, but I know there are some people said they didn't know where it was.

I suggest that we make some decision on either leasing or selling the building and having it gotten rid of. I suggest that we put it up for bid, put it through the legislature, and see if we can't sell it, sell the property. It was purchased I see here for \$10,500 back in 1952, and I hope that the money can go back into the Wild Life Commission. It was purchased with Rockefeller funds.

MR. THOMPSON: Marsh Island, was it not, Ted? Was it Rockefeller?

MR. O'NEIL: Rockefeller funds.



MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I move that we draft the necessary legislation to authorize the Division of Administration to sell the property to the highest bidder, with the money to go into the Rockefeller fund.

MR. BERRY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved and seconded that we draw up the necessary legislation to ask the Department of Administration to sell this. Is there any discussion?

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Jerry, was that your motion?

MR. JONES: Yes, sir.

MR. ANGELLE: Did you mention with the provision that the money be returned to Rockefeller?

MR. JONES: To Rockefeller, the original purchase plus the profit.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any further discussion?

MR. DUPUY: Jerry, did you have in mind as is, where is?

MR. JONES: As is, where is, without us doing a thing to the tower, to the building, nothing.



THE CHAIRMAN: Jerry, would you reword this, so we can get this thing correctly, with all the suggestions, please?

MR. JONES: I move we direct our staff to prepare the necessary legislation to provide that the Division of Administration sell the property to the highest bidder, as is, in place, with all of the funds received from the sale to go to the Rockefeller Fund.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any discussion?
(No response) Hearing no discussion, are you ready for the vote? All those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

The motion is carried.

(Full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission purchased a piece of property in October, 1954, known as the Fur Warehouse, located in



Abbeville, Louisiana, on St. Charles Street; and

WHEREAS, this property consisting of lot, building and tower, was purchased with Rockefeller Refuge Funds; and

WHEREAS, the building and tower, which is in dire need of repair due to years of deterioration, would cost too much to put in working condition; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is desirous of disposing of this property;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby direct Mr. Angelle and the attorneys for the Commission to draw up a bill to be presented to the 1974 Legislature, authorizing the sale of the property, through the Division of Administration, to the highest bidder, as is, where is, with the stipulation that the receipts from the sale revert back to the Rockefeller Refuge



Fund of the Louisians Wild Life and
Fisheries Commission.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. O'Neil, you have
another?

MR. O'NEIL: Well, there was some discussion, Mr. Chairman, on controlling property violators, airboat operators, and we have had a good many letters on it and it is going to be a problem in this session, but I don't believe we are going to have a lot of time in this session of the legislature to discuss that.

THE CHAIRMAN: O.K. Thank you, Mr. O'Neil. The next item on the agenda, Mr. Yancey.

MR. RICHARD YANCEY: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, we have a legislative act that stipulates that 25 cents out of each resident hunting license sold here in Louisiana is to be expended to benefit migratory waterfowl, and we know that Ducks Unlimited has an ongoing marsh management program in Canada, whereby they construct marshland areas, primarily by building dams across water courses for the purposes of creating new waterfowl production areas.



The Commission has customarily turned this money over to Ducks Unlimited with the understanding that it will be used in Canada, in the western prairies, that produce ducks that winter in Louisiana, for the purpose of creating and maintaining and developing waterfowl production areas.

We would suggest at this time that you authorize the Director to turn over \$50,000 to Ducks Unlimited for this purpose. Now this would be an advance payment that would be from the sale of the '73-'74 hunting licenses here in Louisiana. Now we have on numerous occasions inspected these DU projects in western Canada and we find that they are doing an outstanding job up there and we don't know any other way that this money could be better used for duck production purposes, so we would make this recommendation at this time.

MR. BERRY: I so move, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DUPUY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Dupuy, that we accept the recommendation of Mr. Yancy. Is there any discussion?



MR. EDGAR VEILLON: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to discuss that but I would like to say one thing that has been brought to my attention regarding Ducks Unlimited.

I myself am a contributor and have been for several years. I work for them all year long in every means of revenue that they have. I do regret that they can't get involved in some of the mismanagement that goes on because of the possible loss of contributions, and that does have to take precedence over some of the other things that we also consider important, but one thing I think we could point out to them is that there has been some advertising in their magazine that is not in the best management practices for migratory waterfowl.

Specifically I am talking about these hot water pumps that keep ponds from freezing over. As all of you well know, this was somewhat what caused the horrendous problem in Lake Andes last year, trying to retain these birds in areas where nature would not have them be at that time. I think this is just not in the best interests of the birds and I don't think Ducks Unlimited is in that bad a



shape that they have to resort to that kind of advertising. I think we maybe should point out to them that it has been called to your attention and that you would like to see them avoid that kind of thing whenever possible. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Veillon.

MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, may I say something on that subject?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. JONES: While I agree with his remarks, I am not too sure it is appropriate for us as an agency to tell them who should advertise in their magazine and who shouldn't. We become censors of what they put in their magazine. I think our concern is that the money that we contribute to Ducks Unlimited is used properly by them, and if there was some concern by us that the money was not being used properly, I would think, you know, that we should certainly say something to them, but I would hate to take the position of being a censor of Ducks Unlimited and I don't think the fact that I might not agree with everything they do or they believe should make me say that we



are not going to give them the money.

I think we would become a censor of Ducks Unlimited if we did try to censor their advertising. I think it is something appropriate for the Federation to bring to their attention, but I don't see that we should hinge our contribution upon what they put in a magazine and what they don't, because then we I think infringe upon their freedom to put what they want to.

MR. VEILLON: I never suggested that it hinge on that at all, but since we do funnel quite a bit of funds to these people year after year, I think it should be mentioned, perhaps in an unofficial capacity, a handwritten note attached to the check.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Edgar, what particular type of advertising are you talking about where Ducks Unlimited has been involved in hot water pumps?

MR. VEILLON: In their quarterly magazine. In their quarterly magazine to their members, their contributing members.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: What point did they



make that was offensive?

MR. VEILLON: Well, it is paid advertising, Mr. Director. It is paid advertising, and I just don't feel that they have to resort to that. I am sure there is a lot of other paid advertising that they could get to replace that type of thing. In fact, I was very surprised to see something like that in there. I mean, these people are supposed to be the epitome of good management, and there they are, resorting to that kind of thing. It is contrary to their whole philosophy, from what I can see.

MR. JONES: I like to see a publication put in it things that they don't like and things that they like. I hate to see a paper or any publication that slants everything and puts it all one way. In fact, I kind of admire them for taking the man's money and putting the advertising in it. Maybe they ought to write an article and say it is bad for the ducks, but I see nothing wrong. They can take that money and use it up in Canada that they get for that advertising. That is getting money from the opposition.



THE CHAIRMAN: Jerry, you are suggesting they do the same thing as they do with the cigarettes, say "We advertise them, we hope you will buy them, but they will kill you."

MR. VEILLON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Veillon, may I interject this? When you came up, I was so in hopes the Federation was going to give about \$25,000 --

MR. VEILLON: I was in hopes, too, but just before I came up, Mr. Stanek told me we were broke.

THE CHAIRMAN: That explains it. We accept that. Thank you.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make several statements. I agree 100 percent with Jerry Jones and I would just like in passing to point out to you that any management program that we exercise in the state of Louisiana would be comparable to a management program, whether it be hot water pump or what, in a northern area, so it would be the pot calling the kettle black, so to speak.

I agree with you. I am biased. I don't



want it, but I think that Jerry is 100 percent right. And while I am on Ducks Unlimited, let me compliment Mr. Jimmy Walker. I think maybe he has left now, but Mr. Jimmy Walker was a driving force, one of our ex-members who was here a while ago, in the Ducks Unlimited program in our particular part of the state, Mr. Luttrell's and my part, and I am very pleased to say that they are in the process of building --

THE CHAIRMAN: And Marc's.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, Marc is from the free state of Avoyelles, and you know that don't count! But, anyhow, we -- well, I have had very little, nothing, to do with it -- but they are in the process of building Catahoula North, and my hat is off to Mr. Jimmy Walker and I hope this commission will go along with me, with maybe perhaps a little letter of commendation to him.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, I would like to add to that, if I may. All the cities in Louisiana should attempt that. You raise \$15,000 and they will build a lake up in one of the provinces and name it whatever you want. I believe that is



correct, is it not, Dick?

MR. YANCEY: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: \$15,000 is what you have to raise. Now we are having one built up there and it is going to be called Catahoula Lake, Louisiana, North.

Now, is there any other discussion?

MR. YANCEY: Let me add one thing, Mr. Luttrell. As Edgar pointed out, they did run a paid advertisement on this hot water pump, but they also ran a very, very informative article that was written by a member of their staff, about the Lake Andes incident, the hazards involved in holding large numbers of birds in small areas for extended periods of time as it related to disease, so they did help publicize that problem very widely. It helped result in some action being taken that we think is possibly going to forestall similar occurrences in the future. At least it has alerted a lot of people that didn't know about the problem, as to what the problem is and what should not be done. They did run a real comprehensive article in their quarterly about this Lake Andes situation.



As we all know, Lake Andes was drained, and when we looked at it last summer, it looked somewhat like a desert area up there, so that particular situation was taken care of by the Bureau.

While we are on this subject of wetlands, I might add that we learned this morning about a matter that is going on in Congress that pertains to wetlands, and this is that for about the last ten years there has been a prohibition against the use of federal money through the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the purpose of draining wetlands up in the Dakotas and Minnesota, and the administration has proposed that this prohibition be deleted by Congress from this upcoming legislation. Of course, there is some opposition developing from the deletion of this prohibition, and Congressman Reuss from up in Wisconsin is leading the opposition to deleting this prohibition. He wants the legislation to be left as it has been for about the past ten years.

We all know that we lost tens and tens of thousands of potholes and small marshes to drainage through the use of this federal money in



the past in these duck production areas and we are just getting down to the breaking point now. If we are going to continue to maintain waterfowl populations at high levels on this continent, we are going to have to preserve these wetland areas. It is a little bit inconsistent to, on one hand, provide federal money to drain these potholes and marshes while, on the other hand, we are providing money to build new marshes and wetland areas up there.

We have been asked to help join in this opposition to the use of that federal money for the drainage of that particular type of wetland area. I just wanted to mention that to you. We just learned about it this morning.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do we have any other discussion? If we don't, we have a motion on the floor, motion by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Dupuy, that the advance payment of \$50,000 be given to Ducks Unlimited. All those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)



THE CHAIRMAN: So carried.

(Full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Revised Statutes provide for the allocation of a portion of the annual hunting license revenue to be used for the development, maintenance and preservation of marshlands and other habitat productive of migratory waterfowl; and

WHEREAS, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., a private conservation organization is actively engaged in carrying out a program to develop, maintain and improve highly productive waterfowl marshes in western Canada where ducks are produced that winter in Louisiana;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that an advance payment of \$50,000 on the 1973-74 hunting license sales be made to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., with the stipulation that these funds shall



be used for waterfowl habitat development and restoration in the prairie provinces of western Canada; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Ducks Unlimited, Inc., provide this Commission with a detailed report on the projects upon which these funds are expended.

MR. YANCEY: Back in January the Commission submitted its budget to the Division of Administration for consideration in the upcoming session of the legislature, and since that time we obtained a sizable sum of money through the sale of a seismograph permit on the Marsh Island Wildlife Refuge. This actually means that an additional \$3 million will be available for expenditure during the next fiscal year for land acquisition purposes, if we can get our budget amended in the legislature.

We would like to recommend at this time that the Commission approve of our attempt to get the budget amended to add another \$3 million out of this Marsh Island money that would be used for the purpose of land acquisition. I think we all



realize that opportunities to acquire lands and add these lands to the Commission's game management area program are fast drawing to a close. Prices are getting too high. Opportunities to buy land are getting too few and far between.

We would like to recommend that we try to get this money made available to the Commission for expenditure during the next fiscal year, if we can have our budget amended. We would like to recommend that you approve of this effort being made.

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Chairman, I so move.

MR. LAPEYRE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Dupuy, seconded by Mr. Lapeyre, that we try to get our budget amended to take care of the acquisition of land. Is there any discussion? If there is no discussion, those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

So moved. Mr. Ensminger.

MR. ALLAN ENSMINGER: Mr. Chairman and



Gentlemen of the Commission, we have received notice from the State Mineral Board that they have been petitioned to advertise for leasing a tract of land on the western tip of Rockefeller Refuge. This tract of land will encompass about 2220 acres of the refuge. It is adjacent to an existing lease in this area and it is also adjacent to an area that was under lease several years ago in which an oilfield road was constructed for drilling purposes.

It is assumed that if the bids are satisfactory this lease could be developed through extension of this road system. With this in view, I would like to recommend that the Commission approve of the State Mineral Board receiving the bids on this tract of land.

MR. BERRY: So move.

MR. DUPUY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Dupuy, that we approve of the Mineral Board receiving bids on the 2220 acres of land. Is there any discussion? If none, those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye..



THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

The motion is carried.

(Full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has been notified by the State Mineral Board that 2,220 acres of unleased acreage on Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge has been nominated for a mineral lease, and

WHEREAS this acreage has been described and advertised by the State Mineral Board with bids to be opened on May 8, 1974,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby approve the leasing of this acreage by the State Mineral Board, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director is hereby



authorized to sign all documents
pertaining to this lease.

MR. ENSMINGER: The second matter I have
for your approval is a request by Pennzoil Produc-
ing Company to excavate a drilling slip to service
their State Lease 2340, Well No. 15, on our Rocke-
feller Refuge. This work would involve the exca-
vation of a drilling slip in an existing oilfield
well location and would not create any problems to
the Commission. We have a waterfowl impoundment
that is adjacent to this area and at the present
time the levee that would be relocated by this
particular site is in need of some extensive repair
work, anyway, so it would be beneficial to us from
that standpoint, and I would like to recommend
that this permit be granted to Pennzoil Producing
Company.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recom-
mendation. May I have a motion?

MR. BERRY: So move.

MR. WILLE: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr.
Berry, seconded by Mr. Wille, that the Pennzoil



Producing Company be given permission to construct a drilling slip on State Lease 2340. Those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

The motion is carried.

(Full text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has received a request from Pennzoil Producing Company to excavate a drilling slip in an existing canal, State Lease 2340, Well No. 15, and

WHEREAS, this work can be approved without having an adverse influence upon the wildlife habitat,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby approve the request from Pennzoil Producing



Company to excavate a drilling slip,
State Lease 2340, Well No. 15, under
rules and regulations to protect wild-
life interest on Rockefeller Refuge, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER
RESOLVED that the Director is hereby
authorized to sign all documents per-
taining to this location.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We have with
us Mr. Barry Kohl from the Orleans Audubon Society,
or do we have him?

FROM THE FLOOR: He said he would be
here around 11:30.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we will pass and if
he comes before we adjourn, we will hear him.

Mr. Dupuy, I believe you have No. 9.

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Chairman, the Outdoor
Writers Association is going to meet in Quebec
this summer, and in connection with this particular
meeting the Outdoor Writers Association will
arrange and finalize the same type of meeting to
be held in Lake Charles, Louisiana, the following
year. It is my understanding that a great number



of outdoor writers from all over America come and attend these meetings, and the state of Louisiana will greatly benefit from it, if it is held in Louisiana. I believe that it would be well for one of the members of the Commission, and I would suggest the Director and the Chairman, to attend the meeting in Quebec this year to represent the Commission in this respect.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, do I have a motion?

MR. JONES: I so move.

MR. BERRY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Berry, that someone from the Commission attend the Outdoor Writers meeting in Quebec, Canada.

MR. DUPUY: The Director and the Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Director and the Chairman, or one. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)



THE CHAIRMAN: So carried.

A special meeting has been called for May 16 and 17 at Spring Bayou Game Management Area to inspect the facilities of the Saline Game Management Area for the purpose of either accepting or rejecting the repairs. We will meet at the Spring Bayou location at 11:00 a.m. Now this facility is located about one mile from Marksville. The regular meeting for May will be held here on the 27th and 28th.

MR. JONES: I move we set that special meeting.

MR. DUPUY: And that both dates be approved, the 27th and 28th for the regular meeting and the 16th and 17th for the special meeting.

MR. THOMPSON: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Thompson. Is there any discussion? Those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed, no.

(No response)

So carried.



Now we have other business..

MR. THOMPSON: I would like to make a little comment, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: It has been my observation for some time now that there are some inequities in our coon hunting law. Realizing full well some of the dangers involved in coon hunting in reference to night hunting and its close association with outlawing, as I interpret the law now, no person, no kid, no grown person, myself, while either squirrel hunting or in the woods at any time, is able to shoot a coon, which has been almost a heritage way of life that the people of the State of Louisiana have had for years, due to the fact that our present law states that the only way a coon can be killed, other than in your trapping season, is with a party of at least two with dog or dogs, with a single shot rifle or a rifle with single ball ammunition, a .22.



If a person would go into the woods during squirrel season -- and I use this because it is the predominant time of the year that you do see a lot of coons in hunting -- and a kid who gets a tremendous thrill, in my estimation, out of killing his first coon or his second or his third or maybe his hundredth, is completely eliminated from participating in this sport by virtue of the fact of the equipment and the necessity of having the number of people, et cetera, participating in a coon hunt.

It is my recommendation, and I put it in the form of a motion, that this Board go on record as instructing our Director to seek legislation in the legislature this year and see if he can't have it introduced where coons will be legal in the daytime under different circumstances to comply with the thoughts that I have just expressed.

MR. JONES: Jimmy, let me ask you a question on this. One problem I see is that we have a trapping season. This is one of our traditional furbearing animals. I certainly wouldn't want to see us authorize the killing of that animal in



times other than during the regular trapping season because what it would do, it would legalize catching the coon and selling his hide at a time other than the trapping season. Ted, when do we have the coon trapping season?

THE CHAIRMAN: Ted, would you come to the mike and respond, please?

MR. JONES: I think it would fit in with what Jimmy is talking about. During the winter-time, if we could restrict it to that time, because we permit people to go out and take the furbearing animals out of the regular trapping season.

MR. O'NEIL: That is more or less the suggestion that I was going to make, the thing that you said there, that we would want those furs to find their way into the fur trade. We wouldn't want people to just go out and shoot coons and waste them. The meat is valuable and the fur is valuable and we should put something in there.

Now this boy will have to have a trapping license if he sells the fur, so we want to tie that up, Jimmy, so it won't be a waste, everybody just shoot every coon because you find a lot of coons



that nest during the squirrel season. They are easy to kill. They are feeding on acorns and a lot of people could shoot them but we don't want to waste them. We want the furs to find their way into the fur trade.

MR. THOMPSON: Ted, I agree with you 100 percent but --

MR. BERRY: What does a trapping license cost?

MR. O'NEIL: We hope it will cost \$10 next year.

MR. THOMPSON: Let me ask you this. At the present time what are the dates that a person can go into the woods at night and hunt a coon?

MR. O'NEIL: Well, the coon hunter, the dog hunter, there is no restriction on him.

MR. THOMPSON: In other words he can hunt 365 days a year. Then I would be strictly against restricting the motion that I have just made. From a practical standpoint, Ted, and I am speaking direct to you since you are our fur man, I think you know and you realize that the coons that are not in a direct trapping area -- and with due



respect to Jerry, I know what your thoughts are -- are never when they are shot or very, very seldom ever skinned out and sold out as fur.

I might speak on a minority race. I think this has been for years that the minority race has been inherently coon hunters. They are restricted by this law and I don't think any of them ever sell a fur. You know more about that than me, but I would almost gamble that you don't have any records of, say, in the northern part of the state, of many furs being sold, many furs being sold as a furbearing animal in the coon. I think we are -- no, sir, I wouldn't want to change my motion in any way to restrict it to just the trapping season. I don't think these people are trappers as such. I think it is more recreation, meat, but not fur.

MR. JONES: Ted, what did a good coon sell for this year, the fur?

MR. O'NEIL: A good coon in north Louisiana brought a trapper anywhere from \$6 to \$8 for the fur and \$3 to \$4 for the meat and it looks like that is going to continue. They are sold out



and it looks like it is going to continue. They are sold out and it looks like we have a broad market for coon furs and it looks like they are going to be a valuable animal.

MR. JONES: Jimmy, couldn't we just leave it like it is but during the trapping season we take all the restrictions off of anybody going out with a gun and kill them any way they want to kill them. The trapping season is during the time you are in the woods normally in the fall, in the winter. In this way we would insure that we wouldn't have people that are killing them the rest of the year. In other words, during the trapping season you can take them any way you want to take them but after or before the trapping season you have these restrictions. The regular coon hunter with a dog would hunt under the present restrictions we have. Wouldn't that take care of it?

MR. THOMPSON: Well, are you going to leave the coon hunter at night to hunt 365 days a year? Are you going to discriminate one against the other?

MR. JONES: Oh, I would be against that



but that's the way it is now. I am looking for a middle ground.

MR. THOMPSON: You and I are going to cross swords here, I can see that.

MR. JONES: We have crossed.

MR. THOMPSON: May I ask a question? How many coons came from north Louisiana this year?

MR. O'NEIL: About half of the coons come from North Louisiana.

MR. THOMPSON: How many is half?

MR. O'NEIL: We are going to catch 200 and some thousand coons this year.

MR. THOMPSON: And 100,000 are going to come from North Louisiana.

MR. O'NEIL: It amounts to over a million dollars.

MR. THOMPSON: O.K., let me ask you another question. Excuse me one moment. How much is the hunter effort estimated or calculated to be worth?

MR. O'NEIL: Hunter effort? You mean --

MR. THOMPSON: Recreation effort. What figure do we put on it? What is our recreation --



one hunter effort into the woods is valued at how much?

MR. O'NEIL: We need Joe Herring on that.

MR. THOMPSON: What is one coon valued at as a hunter effort? You have got a book. You have got a deal establishing what they are worth.

MR. O'NEIL: Joe says about \$25.

MR. THOMPSON: \$25? That's more than \$13. I still keep my motion as is.

MR. O'NEIL: Jimmy, I think you are getting ready to open up a whole thing that we can't get stopped here.

MR. THOMPSON: I am ready. I am ready to open it.

MR. O'NEIL: If you try to force that, you are going to open up indiscriminate shooting of coons.

MR. THOMPSON: No.

MR. O'NEIL: I know what you are thinking about. Yourself, you would be all right.

MR. THOMPSON: No, I wouldn't. No, I would not. Ted, you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that those coons are being shot today. You



know that a kid going in the woods is shooting them and he is becoming an outlaw, inadvertently, if you want to put it that way. You know that. I don't have to tell you. You know that every colored person that hunts coons is hunting them regardless. You know that our enforcement is not able to -- there is no way. I disagree with you 100 percent.

MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I move to amend Mr. Thompson's motion to provide that the Director instruct the appropriate persons in his department to study in great detail the proposal made by Mr. Thompson and to come back next meeting with a recommendation to the Board.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I would like also to offer an amendment. My amendment would read that I think Mr. O'Neil is biased and he be excluded from this survey. I am going to fight them to the last exception.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Chair rules that you can amend an amendment but you cannot amend an amendment to the amended amendment.

MR. THOMPSON: All right, let me go back. Let me clarify this. I withdraw my amendment. I



think I have pointed out; I think the record will show what my thinking is. I think there is an inequity here and I have the utmost confidence in this Commission and its personnel and I know that you will come up with the proper and right answer, so I will leave it at that.

MR. DUPUY: I will second that motion, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: I didn't hear a motion.

MR. DUPUY: The motion of Jerry Jones that the staff be asked to consider and study an appropriate type of legislation that would amend the present statute.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We have a motion and --

MR. JONES: And come back next month. Come back next month, not next year.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We have a motion and a second to the amendment but I didn't get a motion and a second to the motion.

MR. BERRY: He withdrew his --

MR. JONES: Let me restate my amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right, please. I



wish you would.

MR. JONES: My amendment is that the Director have his appropriate people to study this and come back to the Commission at its special meeting, which will give us time if we agree with what Jimmy says to put it in the legislature. Come back at the special meeting with their recommendations to us.

MR. DUPUY: I will second that.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion by -- who moved that?

MR. DUPUY: Mr. Jones and I seconded it.

THE CHAIRMAN: By Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Dupuy to Mr. Jimmy's motion which was to have the staff draft legislation to authorize hunting of coons in the daytime. Is there any discussion on the amendment, and I am not going to state the amendment because I don't think I could state it. If you want it stated, I will ask Jerry to state it. If there is no discussion, those in favor of the amendment, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those opposed, say no.



(No response)

THE CHAIRMAN: The amendment is carried. Now we will vote if there is no discussion. We are voting on Mr. Thompson's motion to have the staff draft legislation authorizing hunting during the daytime, hunting coons during the daytime, as amended by Mr. Jones. Those in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those opposed, say no.

(No response)

The ayes have it. Motion carried.

Is there any other business?

MR. BERRY: I would like to make one observation as a layman. If we let these lawyers keep making these motions, they are going to have these hunting laws so confused we are going to have to take one of the lawyers with us when we go hunting so we can understand them. (Laughter)

MR. JONES: I have one other matter of a serious nature.

MR. THOMPSON: All natures here, Mr. Jones, are serious.

THE CHAIRMAN: I recognize Mr. Jones.



MR. JONES: I would like to do the same thing as to the bullfrog. I have talked to the biologists. As you know, we have two months out of the year that the frog season is closed, supposedly for the reason that they are spawning. I had one of the biologists show me some specimens, I believe in January, that there were the eggs in them, and he showed them to me in July. That is really hogwash. Anyway, apparently the law is as it is because way back there they thought that was the only time that they spawned.

Anyway, I would like to move that the staff also come up at our special meeting with some type of recommendation as to whether or not we ought to propose to the legislature that we change the closing of the bullfrog season in April and May.

MR. BERRY: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Jones that the staff come up with some recommendations on bullfrog hunting by the special meeting, seconded by Mr. Berry. Is there any discussion?
(No response) Those in favor, say aye.



IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those opposed, no.

(No response)

The motion is carried.

Is there anything else to be brought before the Commission? Yes, sir, come right up, sir. We are glad to have you.

MR. GEORGE RENO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members here. I am George Reno from Venice, Louisiana, the oldest son of Harry Reno, who served here in this department for about 16 years, I believe.

I have been a commercial fisherman for shrimp especially for about 25 years, trying to make a living at this occupation. In 1970 I had the privilege of working with Dr. Merle True and some of his colleagues with the Chevron oil spill. I was hired, me and my boat, for a period of time to make studies on the water wildlife and the effect this oil spill would make on it.

While I observed these biologists making these studies and making these notes, I as a commercial fisherman began to do the same thing on



my own basis in the light of shrimp. I do not have any scientific equipment or scientific data, as some of the men here at the Wild Life have, but I have made observations in four years, made notes on them, and would like to present that here today for just a few minutes.

Our studies that we made on these things took place from Pass a Loutre all the way up to Black Bay and all the way east to Mitchell Keys, which is up to here (indicating on map). We made a daily test with my shrimp net and tabulation of the shrimp from this point, all the way through here, which is a very large area, across Breton Sound, to see what progress the oil spill was making. I discovered that during the months of March and April we had a movement in of white shrimp along the Bay Coquille area and Yaratich Bend, which is right alongside the Main Pass.

According to my notes, these big shrimp are full of eggs, the roe shrimp, and they are trying to get to the beaches to lay. Every area that we found these large white shrimp, laying shrimp, in front of these bays, which was approxi-



mately about seven to ten feet of water, that season in the fall we had a tremendous drop of white shrimp in these bays. The areas that did not have the roe shrimp laying along this in our test did not have any crop of small white shrimp.

So, in doing this study of my own, I have found out that our shrimp, most of them, are laying between the first of March and on through June. The biggest percentage of layers that I found in white shrimp was in the month of June.

I would like to suggest to our fishermen -- I am sorry all my colleagues left when they did -- they have been fussing about let's remove butterfly nets, let's remove night trawling, let's change the size of webbing, let's make sanctuaries, but I hear no one talking about the spawning season of shrimp. I find that in my fishing from the first of March our sea browns are starting to lay, I hear that the brown shrimp are laying in March, and I know the white shrimp are coming in to start laying, if we couldn't have a closed season beginning the first of March, extending to the May season, out into the deep waters, to allow



our shrimp to lay in peace, without being molested by trawlers, night and day trawling.

Out there I have made this observation in the past two months. In the deep water you have the big slabs, we call them. Inside them you have another class of lugger trawling. Inside of these luggers you have a class of skiffs trawling. Inside this you have a class of air cools and out-board motors that are skimming the beaches and the canes, catching the few shrimp that is coming in.

Now I know it is nice to catch these big Charlies and there is good money in it, but I believe we are hurting our shrimp industry by allowing this to continue. These shrimp need some protection and need help, more so in this spawning season than trying to fight the various issues that we have heard before on the floor.

There has been a suggestion made about a three-mile limit. This is to me unsound for the fact that to be able to decide where three miles is from the shoreline by eye on a boat is very difficult and takes a very expensive piece of equipment called loran or radar to rightly tell



how far you are from shore.

You will notice on this map, this Corps of Engineers map, you have a ridge of land under water that has a depth on it, 120 feet, which is 20 fathoms, all the way around our lower coast here in Louisiana. If the Commission would see fit, the Wild Life and Fisheries, to have a closed season, to have an extension of water closed offshore, may I suggest that we use a fathometer reading rather than a three-mile limit. A fathometer, you can get one for \$75, more or less, and anybody can afford to have one. I have got one now four years and I can't go fishing without it. When it breaks down, I tie the boat up and go get it fixed. That is how much I depend on that fathometer.

All your large boats have fathometers who fish offshore. It is a very inexpensive piece of equipment and if the Wild Life would board any boat fishing, he immediately can check the fathometer as to how deep he is, and there is no question about, well, now I can't see the land over there, I don't know whether it is three miles. It is foggy; I can't see. A fathometer reading would



give you a true setting for the whole depth, all around our area where we need some help on our spawning season for our shrimp.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Jones.

MR. JONES: I have two comments. No. 1, I think it is a great idea but the United States Supreme Court has said when you pass the three-mile limit, forget it, Louisiana; you've got no authority. That's gone.

No. 2, the history of the shrimping industry in Louisiana is that we set our seasons and we harvest them on a compromise basis. For example, if we told Dr. St. Amant and his staff, you go and tell us the best way that we can get the most pounds of shrimp, I believe they would come back and say you close all these inside waters, let the shrimp come in, let them go way back out in the Gulf until they get to be big, big shrimp, and then we harvest them way out there and we are going to get the most pounds.

But the problem is, our industry socially and economically is geared differently, in that we



have all these people that have the little boats that they are capable of fishing only certain types of waters, certain times of year, certain times of the week, in fact. We have been regulating our shrimp industry on another basis where you consider all these things.

I think you are correct. We are compared to Texas a lot of times because in Texas they don't have the same situation, all the inland waters. We raise the shrimp for the Texans here and they go down the coast and they catch them when they are big, so their poundage is greater. The harvest in Louisiana has to be geared to something other than just trying to figure out how can we get the most pounds of shrimp. We have got to think about the guy that's got the little boat, you know, and those types of things.

I think you are correct but that is the reason we have not been able to regulate the shrimp-ing industry as you suggested.

MR. RENO: May I say one more thing to this? My suggestion for having this season from the first of March until the May season opens would



not hurt anyone because there are no small shrimp in the bays in this period of time.

MR. JONES: But you are talking about going out past three miles when you you start talking about the depth of the water, aren't you?

MR. RENO: Right.

MR. JONES: And we have no authority to regulate that.

MR. RENO: But out to a depth of water, if the spawning shrimp -- only during the spawning season, when the brown shrimp are laying, when the white shrimp are trying to make it to the beaches to lay. We need help in this area. It would hurt no one, because the factories are closing down at this time for repairs. Most of us close down for boat repairs at this time. If would be some way made out, I think we would have more shrimp for everybody, even in the bays and inside waters.

MR. JONES: I think you are right. I go out and catch them on the beach right now, this time of year, simply because those white shrimp are up on the beach. It is a fine time to trawl.

MR. RENO: But every one we catch now of



the big white shrimp, we are destroying -- I forget what the percentage is -- they are full of eggs, roe shrimp, and we need help somehow to give the shrimp a chance to lay in peace.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Reno, for your comments, and we certainly do want to commend you for your studies.

Next, Mrs. King.

MRS. RUTH KING: Gentlemen, my name is Ruth King. I am publicity chairman for the East Bank Commercial Fishermen's Association. I would like to take this time to kind of support the commercial crab fishermen.

As we understand it, the Louisiana Wild Life Federation, their Salt Water and Fresh Water Fish Committee, has passed a resolution to prohibit the taking of female blue crabs. As I understand it, this was supposed to have been introduced and they were supposed to seek legislation on this.

I would like to take this time to say that the commercial crab fishermen will fight this in the legislature to the end and we would take



this time to ask the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to kind of support us in this fight.

Really I don't see the reasoning behind the resolution to start with. None of us do. If Mr. Edgar Veillon -- I know he is here -- if he knows why this resolution was passed and the reasoning behind it, I would certainly like to hear, so I could bring it back to the commercial crab fishermen, to try to explain it to them, because they don't know why this resolution was ever passed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mrs. King, I think I can say without reservation that the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission agrees with you 100 percent.

MRS. KING: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: And thank you for coming here.

MR. JONES: You know, when the sports fisherman catches that old speckled trout full of eggs, he don't throw him back. Why should we throw the female crabs back?

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else? Is Mr. Kohl in the audience?



MR. BARRY KOHL: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are ready to hear you at this time, if you will come to the mike.

MR. JONES: Mr. Chairman, I previously discussed with you that I had to leave at 11:30.

THE CHAIRMAN: You are excused.

MR. BARRY KOHL: My name is Barry Kohl and I am conservation director of the Orleans Audubon Society. I have asked time today to discuss the potentially damaging project of the Lafitte-LaRose Highway.

The environmental impact statement, the final, of course, has been circulated for some time, dated 1972, and I have had a chance to go through this impact statement, because there is a Corps of Engineers permit pending on this, Jefferson Parish Wetlands No. 2.

In reviewing the permit application by the Louisiana State Highway Department and going through the impact statement that they have prepared, I found some very interesting information. First of all, just as some background as to what the Lafitte-LaRose Highway is, this is data taken



from their impact statement. It will be a ground level highway, four lanes wide, going through the Jefferson and Lafourche Parishes. It will cross 17 miles of undeveloped wildlife habitat, eight miles of fresh water marsh, seven miles of salt water marsh and two miles of swamp land. Almost 1,000 acres of undeveloped land will be used for right-of-way. The total cost of the project in 1974, according to a letter from Mr. Landry, is \$70 million for the highway project. That is the 1974 cost.

Compared with the 1972 cost, which is listed in their impact statement, there is a \$48 million difference, so the cost has gone up \$48 million in two years.

The Highway Department, on page 6 of their environmental impact statement, states that the completion of this project will improve existing land uses and marine navigation, which will be of economic and social benefit to the community. It is not anticipated that there will be any curtailment of the beneficial uses of the environment or changes in the ecological balance. That is



quoted from their impact statement. I will read this again near the end of my talk.

I would like to discuss briefly the value of the area to be impacted by the project. As you are aware, the ground level highway crosses the Des Allemands-Salvador-Barataria Bay estuarine complex. The ground level highway will act as a barrier, slowing down the flow of fresh water from Lake Salvador into Barataria Bay. This could change the isohaline characteristics of the area.

This possibility is of great concern to us as well the commercial fisheries and sports fisheries groups. Barataria Bay is the most biologically productive estuary in Louisiana and the United States. Now this is an important fact to consider when reviewing projects in this basin.

According to Dr. Paul Wagner, who studied Barataria Bay as a research biologist in the LSU Sea Grant program, he has the following data. Barataria Bay produces 44 percent of the total state fishery harvest. The Des Allemands-Salvador-Barataria Bay area leads the state in total fishery harvest, with a landing of 371 million pounds per



year. Barataria Bay leads the state in oyster production, blue crabs taken per acre, menhaden production, catfish and bullhead harvest. It is second in the state in shrimp landings, croaker landings and speckled trout.

Gentlemen, I am sure you can appreciate the value of this estuary to the economy of the state of Louisiana. The total annual dockside value alone of fish caught in Louisiana is approximately \$200 million per year. Now that is the dockside value, which of course would be multiplied several times after it goes through the retail market.

It is with these figures in mind that I would like to discuss the plans for this area. I am sure many of you are aware of the Lower Jefferson Parish street plan. Here is an article from The Times-Picayune, dated November 15, 1972, discussing the development of the Lower Jefferson Parish area. I will include this with my finalized statement that I will turn in to the Director tomorrow, and all the supportive information that I have.



The intent of this Jefferson Parish street plan would promote the drainage of all land between Crown Point and Grand Isle. This project and many others would have a devastating effect on the productivity of Barataria Bay, since it would drain all the land on the west side of Barataria Bay. The Lafitte-LaRose Highway is an integral portion of the development and eventual conversion of the productive marsh into reclaimed land.

The impact statement prepared by the Louisiana State Highway Department is grossly inadequate and does not discuss the effect of the highway on commercial and sports fisheries, nor does it discuss other viable alternatives, such as an elevated highway.

Many individuals and organizations have raised objections to the project or have called for a public hearing to fully discuss the environmental consequences before a permit is issued by the Corps of Engineers.

Now I have a few letters that I took from the Corps of Engineers file a few days ago. There is a letter of objection from the Orleans Audubon



Society; from Calvin Fleming, who is 28 percent owner in the Fleming Plantation. The Highway Department will need right-of-way in order to cross, to build the highway. St. Charles Environmental Council; South Louisiana Environmental Council; Louisiana Wildlife Federation; Louisiana Shrimp Association has opposed it and asked for a public hearing and also additional environmental studies. The League of Women Voters of Jefferson Parish; League of Women Voters for Louisiana; League of Women Voters for New Orleans. A letter from a biologist at Tulane University and a letter from the Sierra Club, all in opposition to the proposed highway and/or request for public hearing and additional biologic studies.

There were two letters in the file that I find quite interesting. One letter was from Bob Lafleur with the Stream Control Commission. I would to just read a couple of words here. According to Mr. Lafleur, he states, "At this time we do not have sufficient information on any of the above points," talking about the disruption and long-term changes in the environment, changes in isohaline



patterns. He says, "We do not have sufficient information on any of the above points to allow us to give a comprehensive comment relative to water quality or water quality certification regarding this project."

Another letter which I believe --

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Barry, when was that letter dated?

MR. KOHL: This letter was dated March 20, 1974. There is a letter dated March 29, 1974, from the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission by Mr. Robert Murray. He states, "Personnel of this agency have not made a detailed study of the proposed project as it relates to the area's fish and wild life resources. A check with technical personnel has revealed that in general this project will be very damaging to fish and wild life habitats. It is particularly true for the section from Bayou Perot to Bayou Lafourche, where a very valuable and productive marsh will be traversed." He goes on to say -- this in a letter to the District Engineer, with a copy to the Highway Department -- he goes on to say that "if you feel



additional special evaluation is warranted in this case, you should request this through Director Angelle, since such an undertaking would entail a temporary reassignment of personnel."

We believe that these two letters from state agencies support a need for additional biologic study in the areas of Des Allemands, Salvador and Barataria Bay.

Because of the many proposed projects and the urgency of the situation, we ask that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission conduct a special evaluation of projects proposed by state and federal agencies which will have a negative impact on the productivity of Barataria Bay. There should be a study of the cumulative impact of many of the drainage projects proposed by the Jefferson Parish which are supported by short-sighted public officials who consider the marsh a vast wasteland.

We also ask that the Commission cease issuing letters of no objection to projects in this area, as many organizations interpret these letters as letters of endorsement to the project. The Wild



Life and Fisheries Commission is the only state agency with the personnel and expertise to evaluate biologic impact of projects on sports and commercial fisheries industries. We ask that you take a stronger position and support a further investigation of the potentially destructive Lafitte-LaRose Highway and associated projects.

We also ask that you ask the Corps for a thirty-day extension of their deadline in order to send additional comments to them concerning this project.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Kohl. I believe we have another speaker who wants to speak on this question.

MS. CAROLINE CROCHET: I am Caroline Crochet of Marrero, Louisiana, speaking for the League of Women Voters of Louisiana.

Our organization is also asking the Corps of Engineers to hold public hearings on this project, the Lafitte-LaRose Highway, and we would like to see the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries take part in assessment of the environmental impact, in order



to make this hearing process meaningful. It is only when we do get full participation in these decisions on the part of the agency which has the knowledge and the experience with water quality and the various factors that go into the biologic productivity of the coastal wetlands that the citizens of the state will be assured that our interests have been fully protected.

I would like to know, is Wild Life and Fisheries the agency to issue a letter of certification under Section 401 of the Water Amendments. This is a question I was told to ask.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Bob, is that under our Stream Control Commission Section 401?

MR. ROBERT LAFLEUR: Yes, it is.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Would you respond to the lady, please?

MR. ROBERT LAFLEUR: The official water pollution control authority of the state, of course, is the Louisiana Stream Control Commission, and as such it falls to the lot of the Stream Control Commission to write these letters of certification or to deny them or to put whatever conditions in



the letters of no objection, the letters of certification. Really, the letters of no objection contain certification language.

With respect to this particular project, as you heard earlier in discussion here this morning, I asked of the Highway Department certain questions. I might add that since that letter was written, I have been visited by a representative of the Department of Highways and they have mentioned or suggested several alternatives or ways out of this horns of the dilemma that we are here this morning about. But we are, the Stream Control Commission, the official authority.

MS. CROCHET: Thank you, gentlemen.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, ma'am. I believe I understand that Mr. Kerner wants to speak. Have Mr. Kerner come forth.

MR. LEO KERNER: Gentlemen of this Commission, we just hope and pray that you don't send any letter of opposition to this Lafitte-LaRose road. Every one of those people they are talking about that oppose this thing don't live in Lafitte or LaRose. All those people live in the City of



New Orleans and they have got more waste going out in their area than anywhere else in the state of Louisiana. They had better look at their own section before they start talking about us.

Now I want one of these people to come down to Lafitte and get injured and if they get up to that bridge and holler "wetland" when it is open and a barge is going through that is broke, I will be with them. If one of their wives or daughters is having a baby and they come up to that bridge and it is open or broke and they holler for wetlands, I will be with them.

That Lafitte-LaRose road won't disturb one fish, one shrimp or one crab in that area. You already have a four-mile road from LaRose coming this way, anyway, and this is only 16-1/2 miles and when it leaves Lafitte in Barataria, you have got 12 miles to go, and it is going to be three miles of bridge from the Intracoastal Canal to Bayou Perot.

The only family in that area that is fighting there is the Fleming family, and every canal that they have on their land to get oil wells



they never hollered for the environmentalists to come in and stop them from digging those canals. They just hit a salt dome in that area. Ask them if they are going to stop them from getting to that salt dome so they can get that oil down there.

We are sick of these people. They talk about the Lafitte Park because they want to put a boardwalk in there. We wasn't against it or for it, but what in the world is the Lafitte Park going to do for Lafitte when you stop you from getting fresh water and new bridges. We don't want it named Lafitte Park, anyway; we want it named the Swamp Park, Swamp National Park. Are you going to walk through there and see a sign where a mocking bird sat here in 1900? We are not for that.

They say it is going to stop the flow of Lake Salvador. How ridiculous can anybody talk? This gentleman doesn't know what he is talking about. When that bridge goes over Bayou Perot, that's the only outlet you've got that is going toward Lake Salvador and the Intracoastal Canal. The bridges are going over these two canals and



bridges and bays. They are not going to interfere with any water flow. Who ever heard of that?

Do you think that in Lafitte where we had that meeting the other night with all these fishermen that they would do anything to hurt themselves? The fishing industry is in a mess now, but you don't think that those people that signed that petition that we have there -- check every one of those names on there; those people live in Lafitte. There is not one soul on that petition that lives anywhere else but in Lafitte, not one person. All the elected officials in that area signed the petition. All those fishermen that were there that night signed the petition, small and large boats, and the New Orleans Shrimp Association come out against it. Isn't that wonderful?

Check your Louisiana Shrimp Association. The only way they get fishermen to belong to that, they pay their dues, man. We are not worrying about what they talk about. They don't live in Lafitte, either. How many are in that Louisiana Fishermen's Association?

Let me tell you this. Since 1947 we



started that project. That is 27 long years ago, and in our area only one family opposed that road, and that is the Fleming family. If you had a road going to heaven, you would have more families in that particular area that would take that road to heaven and oppose it. One family. Can you imagine something like that?

And these people here, all of a sudden -- the oil companies have destroyed everything in Lafitte. You don't have any more muskrats on account of the oil companies. They never opposed them. Now that they are starting to dig back there, are they opposing that?

Finally the State of Louisiana gets a Southern governor, all these years, and finally we are getting money to build a road from Lafitte to LaRose, and they tell you it is bad. I want them to move in Lafitte and, like I am telling you, if they oppose that bridge, those bridges, I will oppose it with them.

We have had public hearings on this road in Lafourche twice, three times. We have had it in Jefferson Parish Council twice. We have had it



in Lafitte five times. This road has been approved. I went to Washington, D.C., when these environmentalists almost stopped. I went to Washington, D.C. twice and argued the point and we beat them.

If you gentlemen were to stop this road and try to make them direct that road six inches either way, it would prevent it from being built at least seven years. We need that road now. We don't need it in seven years. All we need to do is get the Corps to issue that permit and we got a road and we need it, gentlemen, and that road is not going to hurt one individual.

Go to Corpus Christi, Texas. That is a big fishing industry. They just got through building six-lane highways all the way to Padre Island. We were swimming there last year. See if those roads affect anything with the fishing there. They have a road all around Corpus Christi. Do you think it affects anybody in the fishing industry?

These people are against I-410 when we just got through passing a bond issue where we had to put a tax on our property, and we voted for that road, and now the Governor wants to give us I-410



and it is going to destroy the shrimp. The only time they have ever had shrimp where the I-410 is going to pass is when you buy them in the frying pan or in a dish. There ain't no such a thing as shrimp or salt water.

He stands up there and says it is going through salt water. That road of Lafitte-LaRose don't go through one foot of salt water, not one foot. I am not talking about a gallon. I am talking about not one foot.

Gentlemen of this Commission, I ask you, with everything that is in me and I expect to be in politics for many years to come -- I have to run every year in that Lafitte area and I believe if you look at the returns, I win bigger and bigger every time -- do you think I would try to hurt those people? We need that Lafitte-LaRose road more than any road in the state of Louisiana.

When that hurricane hit the last time and when those barges took those bridges out, we were tied on that other side of that bayou for seven days, I would have liked them to have been there and I'll bet they wouldn't be hollering to



stop that bridge.

I ask this Commission to ask the Corps of Engineers to issue that permit as soon as possible, not extend it thirty days or extend it thirty minutes. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir. Anyone else care to speak? Mr. Kohl, yes, you can have a rebuttal.

MR. KOHL: I just wanted to mention that the State Highway Department, in their impact statement, states that the area is composed of saltwater marshlands. In fact, it would cover about eight miles of salt water marshlands, as the State Highway Department states in their impact statement. I think that is rather interesting.

Another comment is that we are not asking the Commission to oppose the Lafitte-Larose Highway. We are just asking the Commission to conduct further studies as to the impact of the highway on the marshlands and also to come up or possibly help the Louisiana State Highway Department to come up with some alternative plans for the highway. We are not opposing the bridges. We don't want to



stop the people from Lafitte going to higher land during a hurricane. We are just opposed to the building of a ground-level highway across 17 miles of productive marshland and swamp land, especially with the preliminary information that we have which shows that it could have adverse effect on the environment.

Now this is yet to be proven, but we would like the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to do a study, conduct a study, to come up with information you can show either yes or no, it will or will not be harmful to the commercial and sport fisheries.

Also, one other thing that many of the members of these groups who sent in letters of objection, they do live in the area. We have Audubon members living in the area and I think the letter of objection from Mr. Calvin Fleming is significant. He has asked for a public hearing and also additional studies of the Lafitte-LaRose Highway.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Kohl. Is



there anyone else who cares to speak? If you don't, I want to say this. I want to thank Mr. Kohl and Ms. Crochet and Mr. Kerner for the facts that you brought before the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission. I would also like to state, unless I hear an objection from some of the Commission members, that I would recommend that the Wild Life and Fisheries staff reevaluate the facts concerning this question. Do you have any objection? (No response) So ordered.

Is there anything else to come before the Commission today?

MR. PETER VUJNOVICH: My name is Peter Vujnovich. I am the president of the Louisiana Oyster Dealers and Growers Association.

Last year in the month of May we had planted \$100,000 worth of clam shell in the Hackberry Bay-Bay Ducheine area, which is a seed ground reservation of the State of Louisiana. It was brought to our attention through Mr. Schafer that the Texas Oil Company is planning on putting four drilling locations in the seed ground area, and I am here to ask the members of the Board what is the



possibility and what are you all going to do about the destruction of this area.

THE CHAIRMAN: Harry, will you respond to the man's question? Do you have some information?

MR. HARRY SCHAFER: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board, Bay Ducheine is in the statute as a seed reservation. It is listed as such. Of course, the Department of Conservation and Mineral Board also issue leases and they have issued leases to Texaco Company, who has many oil wells in there now. We met with the members of the Texaco people before we put the shell plant in and asked them if they had any future plans for any more oil wells in the area where we wanted to plant the shells.

We worked out an area and finally put the shells down and about two months later they came back and said that they had reassessed the wells there, the oil in the area, and they wanted permission to go ahead and put, or they came and told us they were going to put a well right where we planted the shell. It was right on the edge of it and we figured it would destroy about four acres



of the shells we had put down. They agreed to come back in and plant a bargeload of shells which covered six or eight acres, so we got an additional six or eight acres from that, and they said they would not do anything for 18 months.

Now they are back again, and they have got four wells they want to put down now. Two of them are right in the shell plant and two or them are right on the line. I guess this is what Pete is talking about. I really don't know what we can do since this is issued by another agency and they have the statutory right to issue permits for these things. Either we take this out of the seed reservation area and go ahead and lease it with the condition that Texaco has prior rights, or we try and keep it and work as close as we can with the Texaco people.

MR. BERRY: Harry, will they go ahead and reshell another area for us?

MR. SCHAFER: No, they said they couldn't do that any more.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: How big an area are we talking about, Harry?



MR. SCHAFER: Well, we have a 450-acre shell plant in there right now, and it is due to open on September 1 when the season opens. We asked them to see if they could hold off until that time and they said they couldn't possibly do that, that two of them, they had to go in as soon as possible and try those, and then if those hit, then they would go back to the other two, but we are looking for two to start right away.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: Do you feel Texaco's lease has jurisdiction over ours?

MR. SCHAFER: I don't know. Marc might be able to answer that.

MR. DUPUY: I don't know about the answer to that but it seems to me that we can get some compensatory damages in the event that drilling does take place, and the state is entitled to surface damages.

MR. SCHAFER: Well, I don't know what the compensation would be. These are seed oysters that are in there, and when they start drilling around there, the whole crop is going to go. Now I don't know how you replace the seed oysters. We



have been waiting for 18 months, or we will have waited for 18 months for the oyster people to get these things.

MR. DUPUY: Perhaps we ought to discuss that with the Attorney General and see if they do in fact have a priority and if they do in fact have the right to do it. If so, then maybe we can work something in the line of directional drilling from elsewhere, off the 450 acres. That is not a very big area and directional drilling can easily accomplish that.

MR. SCHAFER: Well, we spoke with them about this and they did move two of them back to the line to directional-drill, and they said that is as far back as they can move them and still be able to hit whatever they are trying to hit. We have met with them a bunch of times and I think I have taken it as far as I can take it.

MR. DUPUY: Well, maybe we ought to take some official position in opposition to -- I don't know if we have any right to do it. I just don't know the circumstances.

MR. VUJNOVICH: Gentlemen, may I have



two more minutes?

THE CHAIRMAN: All right.

MR. VUJNOVICH: I have been in this oyster industry since the age of 13 and in the Hackberry Bay area I purchased some leases in the early part of the 40's and I have been the owner of a little better than 100 acres of these oyster leases, and I have worked mighty hard to bring their production up. It is a very, very good producing area, like everybody in the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries Department knows that I work that area, and I prosper and I make enough out of that area to feed six children and my wife and myself. Also I am an oyster dealer here in the City of New Orleans and right now I am in the process of spending about \$60,000 to remodel my place to meet the Food and Drug Administration laws.

About three weeks ago it was brought to my attention by Mr. Summers that due to the fact that it is a seed ground reservation that I am unable to fish the oysters in this area, so I shrug my shoulders and say O.K., it's all right, I will wait until I can do something about it.



Then two weeks ago Mr. John Lee, the head surveyor, told me that due to the fact that my leases are in the seed ground area, that they will be taken away from me and they will not be given back to me in January of 1975 when the lease expires. I feel this, gentlemen. I am a hard working man, a good citizen of this country, and a good oyster farmer. If I have to give up my hundred and some more acres for a seed ground area, gentlemen, I will gladly give it to the state, but on these conditions, that the oil companies do not destroy them.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to respond?

MR. SCHAFER: I have no response, but I will be glad to answer any questions.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: The gentleman has a legal lease from this Department?

MR. SCHAFER: Right.

DIRECTOR ANGELLE: And we are taking it away from him?

MR. SCHAFER: We will not renew it when it comes due, when the 15 years are up on the lease.



DIRECTOR ANGELLE: On whose recommendation is that, that he cannot renew it?

MR. SCHAFER: This is a policy that has been in effect for years, that once it is declared an oyster reservation, then the leases in there, as they expire, we do not renew them. They have had other leases in there that have not been renewed. Mr. Vujnovich has some left in there. He is the last one in there. He does have some real good producing leases and they will expire the end of this year and we had said we were not going to renew them.

MR. BERRY: Why are we not going to renew them, Harry? Why haven't we been renewing these leases?

MR. SCHAFER: Because it is a seed ground and we usually in these seed grounds try to get all the leases out of there so that we can manage them. Now he does have a problem in there. He has a lease and the area is closed. He has difficulty getting in there now to move these. He has got some good seed oysters in there that could be moved in June and July and put on some growing grounds



that he could harvest this fall, but the thing is closed right now. There is a possibility the Board might want to issue a permit to him to get his oysters off there.

MR. BERRY: When was that area designated a seed ground?

MR. SCHAFER: '48.

MR. WILLE: The man is presently producing oysters on this land?

MR. SCHAFER: Yes, he is.

MR. WILLE: If so, what would prevent us from renewing his lease?

MR. SCHAFER: What would prevent us?

MR. WILLE: Right.

MR. SCHAFER: Policy.

MR. WILLE: Commission policy?

MR. SCHAFER: Yes.

MR. WILLE: When was the policy made?

MR. SCHAFER: Before my time. I don't have any idea.

MR. WILLE: Well, why was the policy made?

MR. SCHAFER: So that there would be no



private leases in the seed reservations and that we would have complete control over the reservations.

MR. WILLE: Harry, would it hurt if the leases were maintained out there, would it hurt us?

MR. SCHAFER: This would open a door that we would have private leases inside our reservation and we would not have full control over it. I am not saying that Mr. Vujnovich would go in there and take seed when he is not supposed to be, because he has a right to be there right next to our seed plants, or anybody would, and tell us that he got these off his bed. I am not saying that he would do that, but this is a situation that could develop.

MR. THOMPSON: I don't believe we are following the gentleman's thought. The gentleman said he would be glad to give up the seed ground, his 100 acres, if, contingent that we don't allow the oil companies to come in and tear them up. In other words, he doesn't mind giving it up. He wants to be fair, if I interpret it right, but he doggone sure don't want to give it up and then somebody else come in there and gobble it up by



whichever means they choose. I agree with him. I agree with you and I agree with him. I agree that he should not have the lease, he has had ample time to get out, he has known about this seed ground for a long time, but by the same token, I think that if it goes into a seed ground or whatever use we use it for, it should not be destroyed by another agency.

MR. SCHAFER: Well, Mr. Vujnovich is probably one of the leaders in the oyster industry and I know him and he would give it up if he thought it was to go for the seed grounds but he does have a point in that if Texaco takes it over, then possibly we might give it up as a seed reservation --

MR. THOMPSON: Give him a lease; give him two leases.

MR. SCHAFER: -- and go ahead and release the whole thing back again. Call in the people who lost their leases and reissue those leases and we would be back like we were before it was a reservation.

MR. THOMPSON: I buy that. You keep up with it and keep us informed.



MR. LAPEYRE: Is this the very same acreage where these four wells are involved?

MR. SCHAFER: He has leases that are right in the middle of the wells, don't you?

MR. WILLE: Harry, is there some reason why we can't grant him a permit to go back in there and get his seedlings out of there that he needs to get out?

MR. SCHAFER: I think we could. We could have a man aboard or stand by as a shell plant while he is removing his oysters. I see no problem there.

MR. WILLE: I don't see why he shouldn't be able to do it.

MR. THOMPSON: I am anticipating that he has already anticipated this and done it, taken care of it. Am I correct?

MR. SCHAFER: No, he has oysters in there that he would like to move, I am sure.

MR. THOMPSON: He has not anticipated this --

MR. VUJNOVICH: Mr. Chairman, may I --

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.



MR. VUJNOVICH: You see, when I purchased these leases, Mr. McConnell was the head of the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries and he stated to me -- naturally I don't have it in writing -- for me to go ahead and buy those leases and that as long as I pay my yearly taxes and as long as I pay my fee, you know, when the 15 years expire, for resurvey of the things, that I can own that as long as I live or my heirs or my children or whoever they are. That was stated to me. And as you know, this has been a seed ground reservation for quite a number of years. Already my leases have been given to me after the 15 years expired. During the time that it was known as a seed ground reservation it was given to me by the Department, and I always did believe that it was going to be given to me again because I received --

THE CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. If you will just hold a minute until he changes the tape.

MR. VUJNOVICH: And as I heard here said that I had due notice of this so I could take the oysters out. Well, I want to explain one thing. I am an oyster man and a good oyster man. They



don't have too many left like myself in the State of Louisiana. And I cannot go see myself going in that area and slack my dredges and bury 90 percent of the oysters when they can be salvaged, you know, for the use. If this area is a seed ground area, according to the bylaws of the State of Louisiana, by rights even a trawl boat cannot trawl shrimps in that area without a special permit.

Gentlemen, I ask this. This is early. We still have a lot of time until January. I would like to ask the Board, the Chairman and the Board and Mr. Schafer, to see what the laws truly are in this effect, because if the Texas Oil Company is to remain there under the conditions it is working right now, as far as the area is as a seed ground area, gentlemen, it is not worth a darn, because an oyster takes at least two years after you plant the shell to have some kind of crop out of that.

I can state this, that since the 1940's it is a very, very good area. Like it is right now, the oysters are very sweet. We have a lot of sweet water, and I am very, very leary that if



we do not get some salt water in before the months of June and July that we might lose the whole area, and I would like for you all, if it is humanly possible for me, at least to try to get five or ten thousand sacks of oysters out because I have other areas where I can move these oysters and I do save them during the summer. Thank you.

MR. BERRY: Harry, there is no reason why he can't take his oysters out, is there?

THE CHAIRMAN: He says it can be arranged.

MR. SCHAFER: Authorize the Director to give him a permit.

MR. BERRY: I will make a motion that we authorize the Director to give him a permit to move his oysters.

MR. WILLE: I second it.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved and seconded, moved by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mr. Wille, that Mr. Vujnovich be permitted to move his oysters. Now, is there any discussion?

MR. THOMPSON: Yes, sir. I am not clear on one thing. This man strikes me as a fair and honorable man. If he moves his oysters, what does



this do to the surrounding area of seed? Please, sir, would you come back to the microphone? I don't understand one thing. If you have a permit to remove your seed oysters, what does this do to the surrounding area that is in seed, as I understand it, or maybe I don't understand it. Explain to me.

MR. VUJNOVICH: It will not do anything, because like I stated to Mr. Schafer that if he gives me a permit to move the seed, I will not even let my employees do it. I will stay on the boat personally myself.

MR. THOMPSON: All right.

MR. VUJNOVICH: As I stated to him, if anybody from the Commission sees my boat outside of my line, which is my property, I will gladly then that day release and give everything back to the State.

MR. THOMPSON: I believe you, but you are not answering my question. My question is what would it do to the surrounding area, regardless.

MR. VUJNOVICH: None at all.

MR. THOMPSON: Nothing at all.



MR. VUJNOVICH: Nothing at all.

MR. THOMPSON: Then I have no objection.

MR. VUJNOVICH: If it would do anything to the surrounding area, if I be a dishonest man when I go fish the oysters out --

MR. THOMPSON: No, I had reference to maybe siltation or something of that nature. I am not knowledgeable enough to know, but I want to know. In other words, there will be no repercussions.

MR. VUJNOVICH: No repercussions at all, even six inches outside of my stake.

MR. THOMPSON: Then I honor your request.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Buquet.

MR. BUQUET: Mr. Chairman, could I say something that might clarify the discussion? Mr. Schafer used a good word, policy, and policies are changed from time to time and have been changed in the Oyster Division, particularly in the last several years, but I am glad that he refers to a policy that has been in existence in the past.

Now in the seed area discussion I would like to possibly clarify your thinking by putting



a little light on that. A number of areas in the State have been declared seed grounds through the years, but the policy of the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries has been until such time as they are going to propagate an area, they have not disturbed the leaseholders.

Now we have an area in Terrebonne Parish, for instance, that is called Bay Junop. Bay Junop has been a seed oyster area I think prior to this Hackberry Bay that you are referring to here. The reason the Department took in Hackberry Bay was because there was a certain number of people who wanted this area as a seed ground, but there were leaseholders, so they finally agreed to set it up as a seed ground area, I think the gentleman said in 1948.

Nothing has ever been done by this Department since that time to promulgate anything for the betterment of the oyster industry in that particular bay until last year, until last year. The reason why it was not done is because of the Texas Company having leases there and claiming priority rights at the bottoms as well as the sub-



surface, so that has always been a question.

Last year some people asked that this place be reseeded, which you agreed to do. In fact, you reseeded it and didn't even close it until nine months later. Is that right, Mr. Schafer?

MR. SCHAFFER: The plant was closed but the whole lake was closed then.

MR. BUQUET: The whole lake was closed. Now that was the first time in the history of this Department that you have closed an area on a leaseholder, because after you have issued that lease, by the policies of the past, that lease stays in effect and according to the contract, which means it will expire by limitation at the end of 15 years and at that limitation period you are not forced to renew it, but as long as his lease is in effect, I can't understand how you can stop the man from fishing his oysters, because that is in the contract that you signed.

Now that is what I was trying to come to, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I agree.

MR. BUQUET: I don't understand why the



policy has been changed to where he needs a permit. You didn't use the permit system in Bay Junop two years ago, did you? Well, whenever they had leases in Bay Junop, they fished their own leases all through these years without interference until they finally forced the cancellation of those leases about two years ago. I say two; maybe I am wrong in two. It might be four years.

But the point I was driving at, that has been your policy in the past, and since you had never planted this area, it has never come to light as to what is what. Now you have planted it. Now you have found the problems as to why we haven't planted in the preceding years.

I hope I have put some knowledge in your thinking there. Any questions I could answer, maybe. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to answer, Mr. Schafer?

MR. SCHAFFER: I really don't have any answer. Mr. Buquet is right. This was not planted until last year and it was planted at the insistence almost of the Louisiana Oyster Growers Association.



We had been trying not to plant the thing until all the leases were out of it because we ran into this problem before. That is the only thing.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, you have no objection to the gentleman going in and getting his oysters.

MR. SCHAFER: None whatever.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, what are we arguing about?

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, a resolution by the Commission wouldn't hurt anything. It would just double his right to get in. We have another gentleman who wants to speak.

MR. LOUIS B. CASS: My name is Louis B. Cass. I am president of Oysters, Incorporated, and Westside Oyster Farms. We have oyster beds in these areas and what I am afraid of, when you take Mr. Vujnovich's leases away, Texas Oil Company is going to come right on that same lease, do the same thing they are trying to do to the shell plant. They are going to come in and destroy it and we are left holding nothing.

This is what I would like to see the



Commission start digging into, see if they could stop the Texas Oil Company, because I know how they try to overrun me. I would like to see something be saved out there. There are shells out there now and they want to come in and destroy the shells and don't want to replace the Commission with anything.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have a recommendation on that as soon as we handle the question.

MR. CASS: I would like to see you all handle it because it is a great valuable area and I would hate to see Mr. Vujnovich lose his because I think I am right next in line because I am right next to him and I would like to see the Commission act on it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have a motion on the floor. Is there any other discussion? If none, it has been moved --

MR. THOMPSON: You are going to have to tell me that motion again.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Berry and seconded by Mr. Wille that Mr. Vujnovich be permitted to move oysters from his lease. All



in favor, say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: All opposed, no.

(No response)

The motion has been carried.

Now, if I have no objections from the other Commission members, I would like to recommend that our Director, Mr. Angelle, and his staff, professional staff, be encouraged to take this question of the oil companies, whatever oil company it is, Texaco, up with our Attorney General and determine exactly what is the priority rights on this thing. If there is no objection. Is there any discussion?

MR. WILLE: Discussion, yes. I would like to propose this, that if we do go to the Attorney General and find out that the Texas Oil Company is going to be able to move in there and destroy these shell farms at their own discretion, that the Commission change its policy, and if by leasing to the oyster growers, we can prevent this oil company from coming here and destroying this thing, if that is the only way we have got to get



around it, then we need to renew our policy, because everything changes, just like our new Constitution changed by its passage from a 1921 version. This policy was set into effect many, many years ago and it is the only way we can get around the situation, because it is our duty to protect the oyster growers and see that the fishing industry is protected, that we renew this policy or review this policy and change it and renew these leases to these people in the past that they had, and so forth, and go ahead and let them come in there because we know we are going to get seed oysters that way.

THE CHAIRMAN: Correct.

MR. WILLE: And I think that this definitely should be reviewed by Mr. Angelle and his staff, and maybe we should get a report back. If that is the only way that we can do it, I think that we definitely -- Harry, do you have any objection to this sort of thing? I mean we know that we don't want the oil companies coming in and destroying our shell beds.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wille, in my recom-



mendation I, of course, assumed that Mr. Angelle and his staff would report back to the Commission their findings when they dealt with the Attorney General, and at that time then we would take whatever action was appropriate and necessary, and I think your point is well taken.

Is there any other discussion?

MR. BERRY: I move we adjourn.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I don't know whether I got a vote on my resolution.

MR. DUPUY: You got a vote on your resolution and then the last thing was just a recommendation that the staff handle it.

THE CHAIRMAN: O.K., thank you. If there is no other discussion, we stand adjourned.

. . . Thereupon, at 12:30 o'clock p.m., Tuesday, April 30, 1974, the regular monthly meeting of the Board of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission was adjourned. . . .

Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.



